

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates.

The lack of diversity in media content today has contributed to the 'dumbing down' of the American public, because diverse opinions have become simplified to yes/no choices of two opposing extremes, and because international news has become filtered through the same conglomerates. Our nation risks becoming out-of-touch with Europe and other countries in our perspectives and priorities, while at the same time we are becoming an ever-more-depersonalized and homogenized society, lacking distinction from one city to the next.

The existence of pre-recorded product segments being used in the TV news media is a good example of how much the focus on profits has overshadowed a desire to produce good news. Unbelievably, just the other night, I watched the 6 o'clock news anchor touting a specific device that killed '99.9%' of the bacteria on a toothbrush; and calling that 'a health segment'. The pre-recorded segment was a way to reduce cost or possibly increase revenue. Where did serious journalism go to?

Further, corporate ownership of media has created a situation where coverage of environmental and political issues is in danger of being corrupted by unique financial goals. We the people have needs beyond entertainment. We need to know about the Exxon Valdez or about defective seals on the space shuttle; therefore, we cannot have TV stations owned by Exxon or Morton Thiokol. Ultimately, a corporation is not a human person but rather it is a financial entity with a single bottom-line focus. There is therefore no 'downside' to limiting them their scope to stay within their own business.